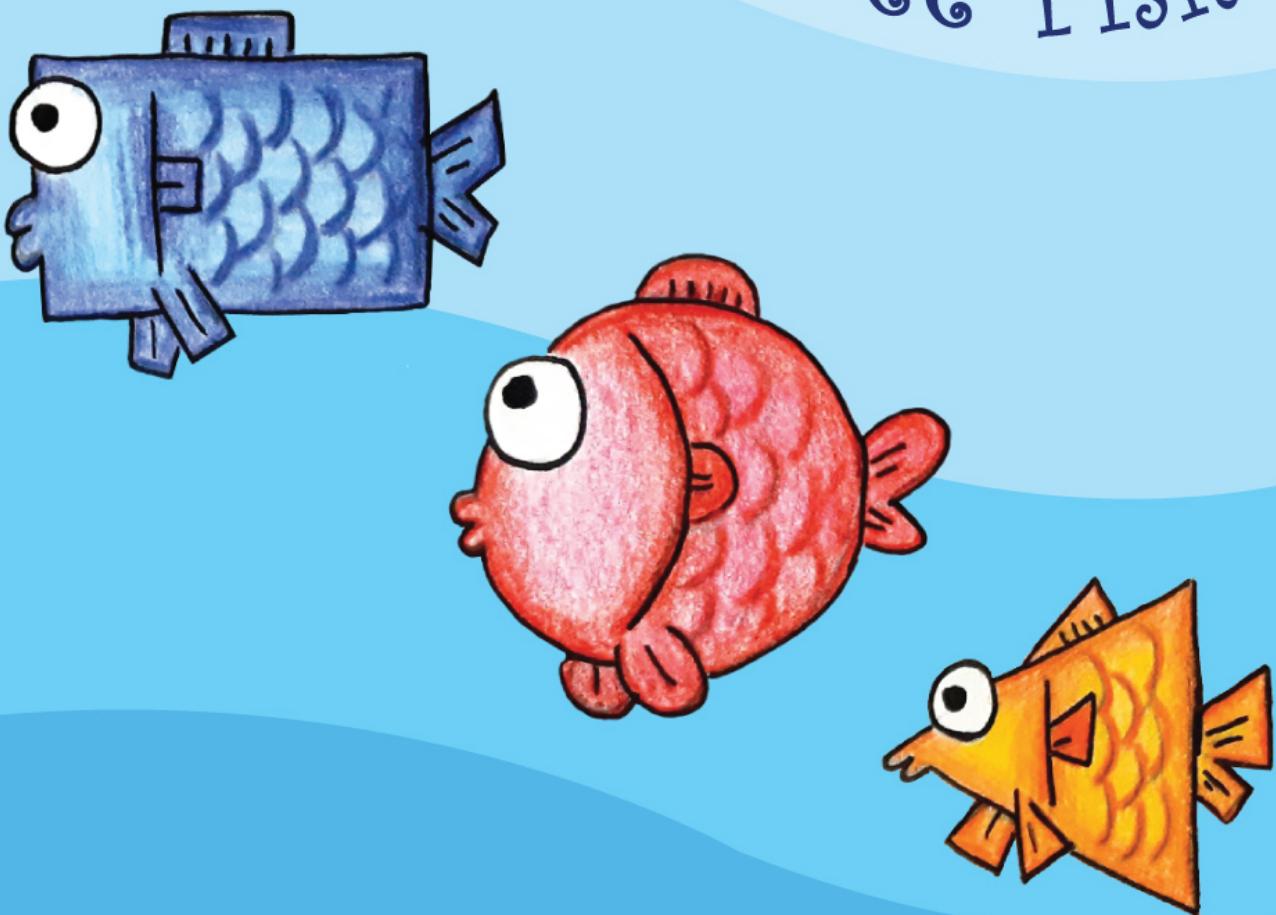


# The Three Fish





# About Jātaka Stories

Chronicled in the Sutta Piṭaka of the Tipiṭaka (the Pāli Canon), the Jātakas are a collection of 547 true stories about the Buddha's past lives. In previous births, the Buddha was known as the Bodhisatta (Buddha-to-be). The Bodhisatta's great compassion and deep wisdom is displayed throughout these inspirational stories. These are also incredible stories of growth and development as the Bodhisatta cultivated the Ten Pāramīs (Great Qualities & Perfections) in tremendous ways. Life after life He selflessly gave all things including His life, limbs and all belongings to accumulate the requisites for Buddhahood.



In these Jātakas stories, many characters that are associated with the Bodhisatta also appeared during the Buddha's time. After countless eons of growing and cultivating the Ten Pāramīs, the Bodhisatta took his final rebirth in Lumbini, Nepal in 563 BCE as Prince Siddhattha. Later at the age of thirty-five, He became the Buddha, the fully Self-Enlightened One.

The Buddha taught the Four Noble Truths and Noble Eightfold Path to the humans and devas. His boundless love and wisdom helped so many on the spiritual path to inner peace and happiness. Many of his disciples would also develop psychic powers, deep wisdom and attain Nibbāna (enlightenment, end of all suffering and rebirth, the highest everlasting happiness).

Each Jātaka story includes 3 parts:

1. The story of the present (during the Buddha's time)
2. The story of the past (during the Buddha's previous rebirths as the Bodhisatta)
3. The "birth identification" (when the Buddha connects the people in the past life story to the people in the present life)

With these inspirational stories, the Buddha shows how to apply great wholesome powers in daily life and the path to Nibbāna (ultimate happiness). All of us have hope to change and improve. With the Buddha's gradual training, each person can begin at one's own level and continue to improve in spiritual healing, growth and happiness. Enjoy!

**Buddhasāsanam Ciram Titthatu**

May the Buddha's dispensation be long lasting!

## **DEDICATION**

To all children around the world

*May these stories inspire great compassion, wisdom,  
and hope for the present and future generations.*

*May these stories give Dhamma strength for the welfare  
and happiness of all children.*

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

To the Saṅgha Venerables, Sayalays, lay devotees, and volunteers who have helped with retelling, proofreading, consulting, illustrating, typesetting and designing these Picture Books.

*May all wholesome wishes of all beings be fulfilled!*

## **PUBLISHING INFORMATION**

The teachings of the Buddha are priceless!

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However, misrepresentation of the contents must be avoided. The derivative copies must be in accordance with the Tipiṭaka (the Pāli Canon). In the publishing process, we strove to retain the originality, essence and moral lessons as told by the Buddha recorded in the Tipiṭaka and Commentaries.

The picture book series are mainly based on the Pāli Tipitaka and Commentaries of the 6th Buddhist Council (Chatthasaṅgħītipitakam, Burma 1952), and were marginally crosschecked against Pāli texts & dictionary, and Pāli experts. Unless otherwise stated, the sources of references for translation are: (1) Jātaka series: The Jātaka, translated by Prof. E. B. Cowell and his team, 1895-1907. (2) Dhammapada series: Buddhist Legends, translated by Eugene Watson Burlingame, 1921.

Due to the publisher's lack of talent, shallow knowledge and a lower than beginners level of understanding of the Pāli language, if you were to find mistakes in this book, please feel free to correct us. Please check the download link for the latest edition before printing.

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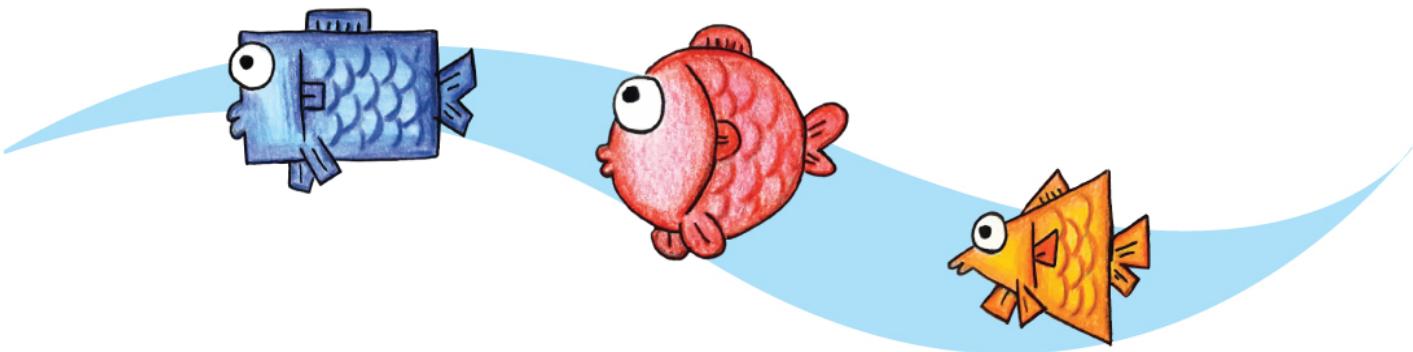
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Jātaka 114: Mitacintī Jātaka

# The Three Fish

Two fish are caught in a net because of their foolishness;  
learn how the third and wiser fish rescues them.



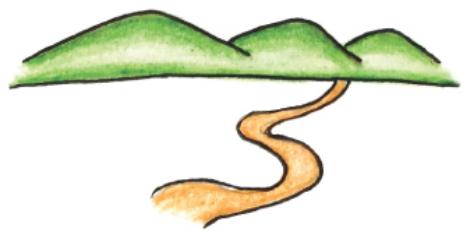
Illustrated by Boey Soo Yin  
Designed by Ong Chong Sai  
Retold by Tay Zi Xiang  
Proofread by Chan Zhi Hong

## First Month

**While at Jetavana, the Buddha told this story about two elder bhikkhus.**

**After their vassa-retreat in the forest, the two elder bhikkhus made plans to go visit the Buddha.**

**They got all the supplies they would need to make the trip, but they were lazy. They didn't go.**



**The first month went by.**

## Second Month

**They got fresh supplies and requisites,  
but the two bhikkhus still didn't go.**



**The second month went by.**

## Third Month

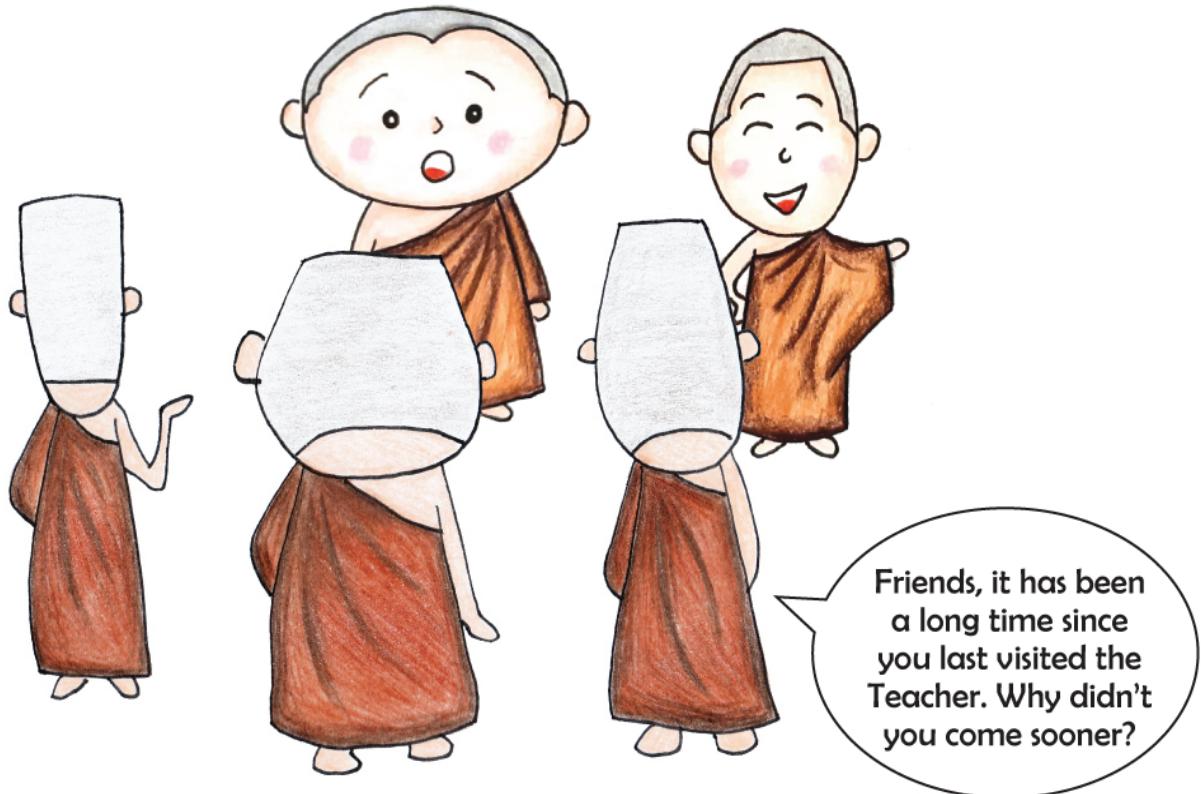


The third month went by.



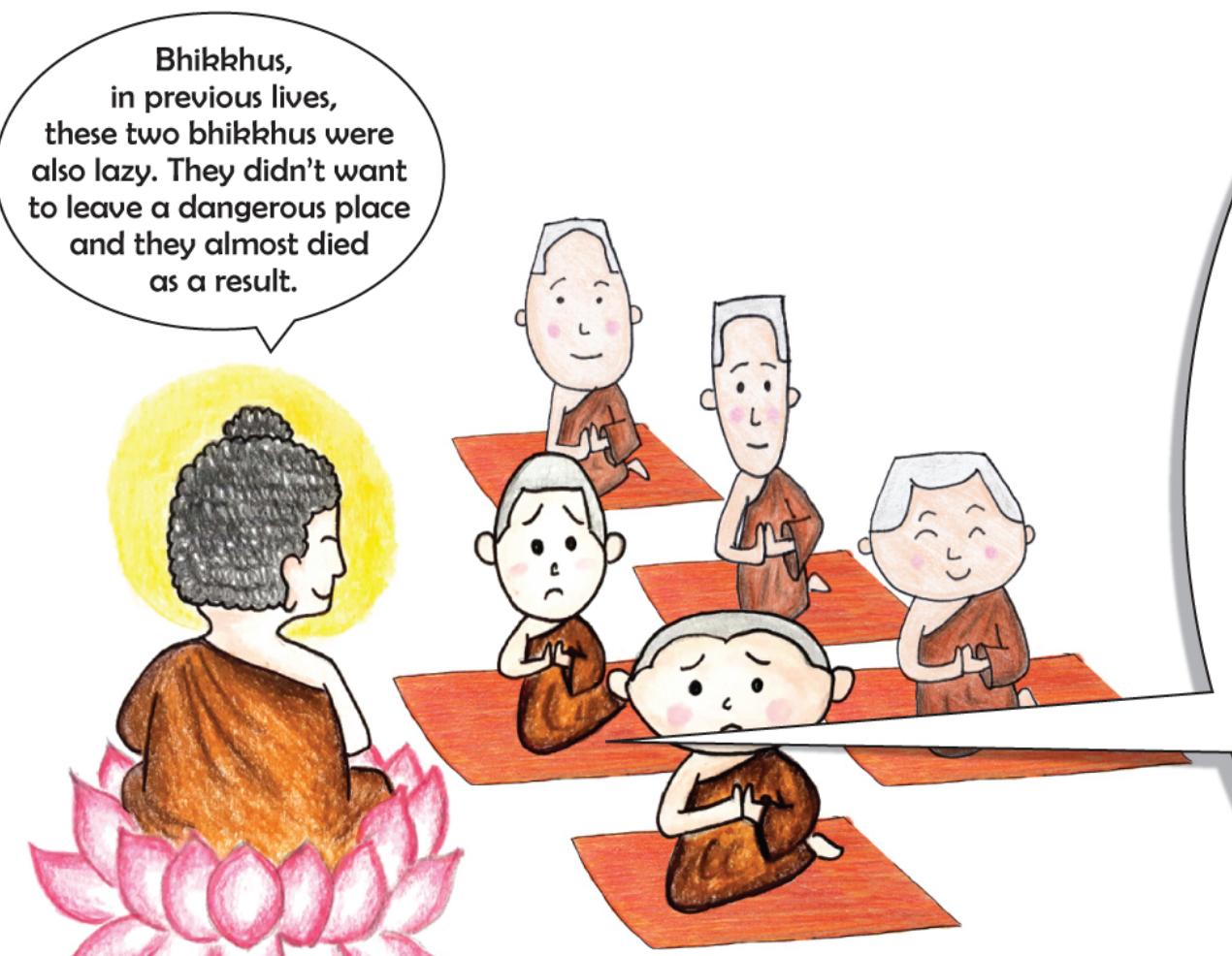
**After being lazy and slow for three months, the bhikkhus finally embarked on their journey and arrived at Jetavana.**

**After putting aside their bowls and robes,  
the other bhikkhus started to question  
what took them so long to come back.  
So, they told them what happened.**



**Then, they went to see the Buddha.**



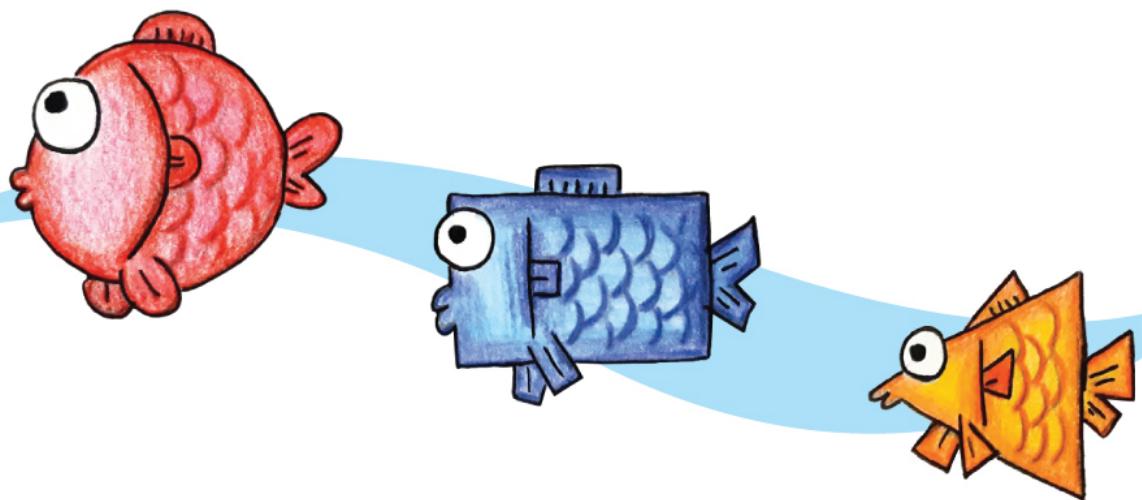


Bhikkhus,  
in previous lives,  
these two bhikkhus were  
also lazy. They didn't want  
to leave a dangerous place  
and they almost died  
as a result.

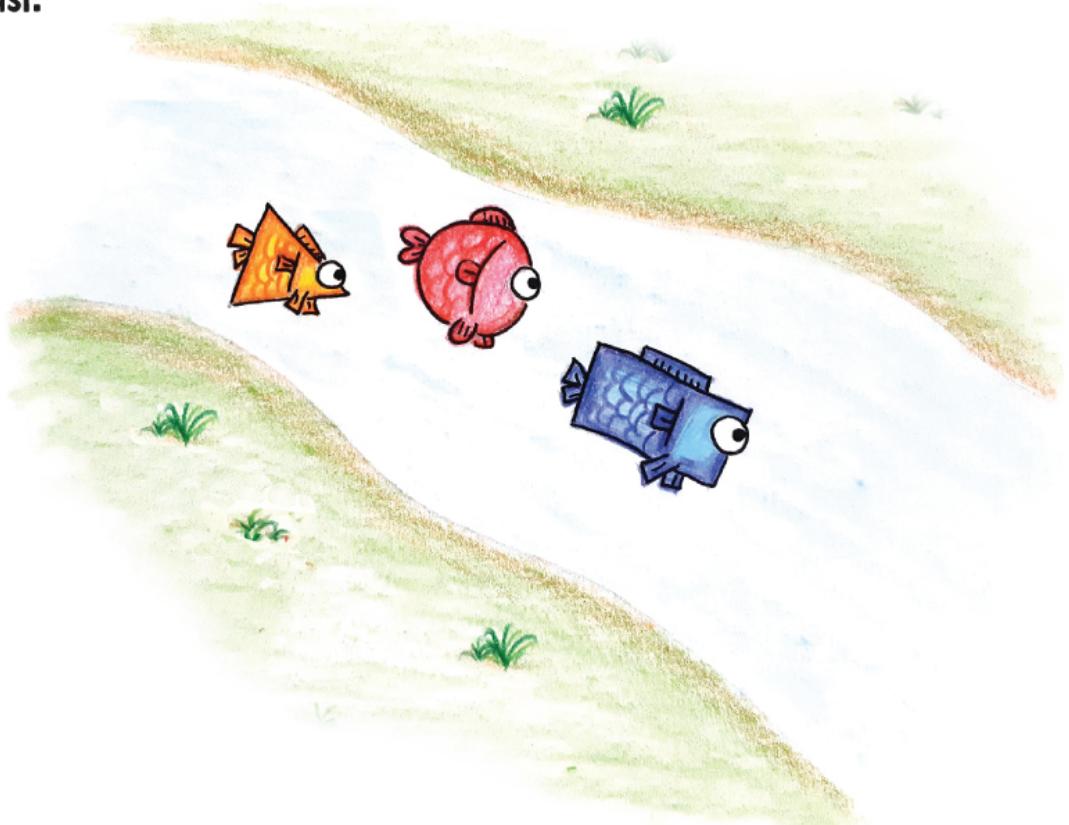
**Then, the Buddha told this story  
from the past.**

**Once upon a time, three fish were living  
in the Ganges River.**

**Their names were: Over-thoughtful (Bahucintī),  
Thoughtful (Mitacintī), and Thoughtless (Appacintī).**



**One day, they swam away  
from the jungle and arrived  
near the great city of  
Bārānasī.**



## First Month

Thoughtful said to the other two,

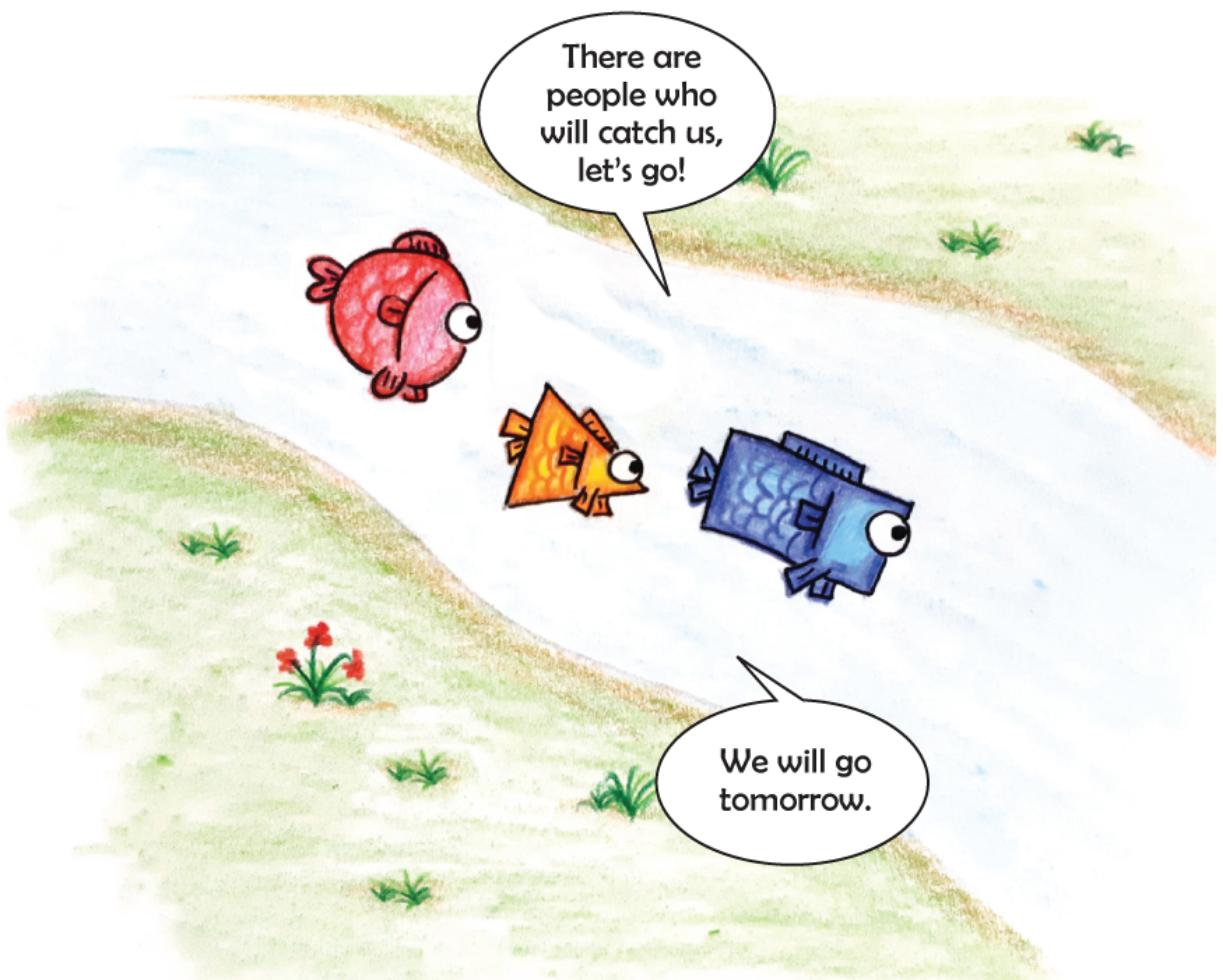
"This is a dangerous place. The fishermen cast many nets and traps to catch fish here. Let's go back to the jungle."



But the other two fish were lazy and greedy; they didn't leave.

The first month went by.

## Second Month



The second month went by.

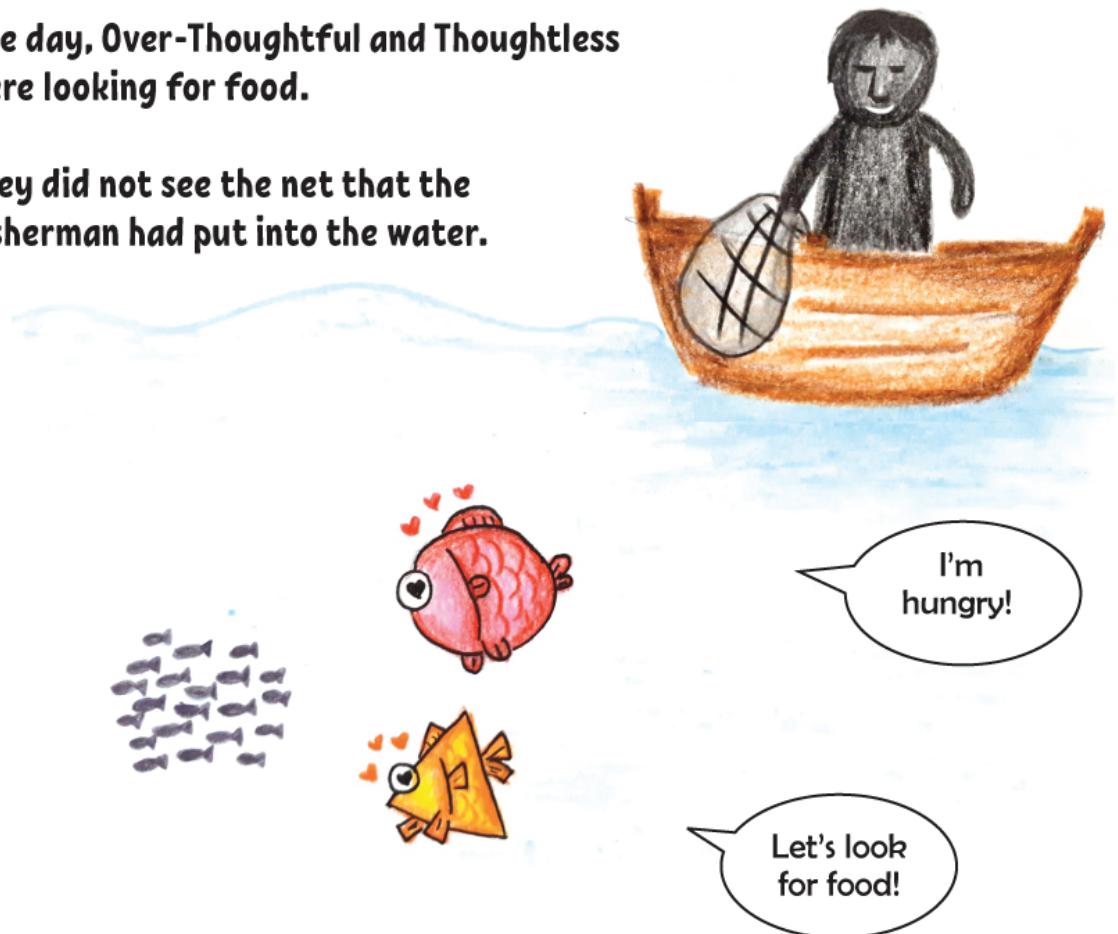
### Third Month



**Three months passed, but  
they still didn't leave.**

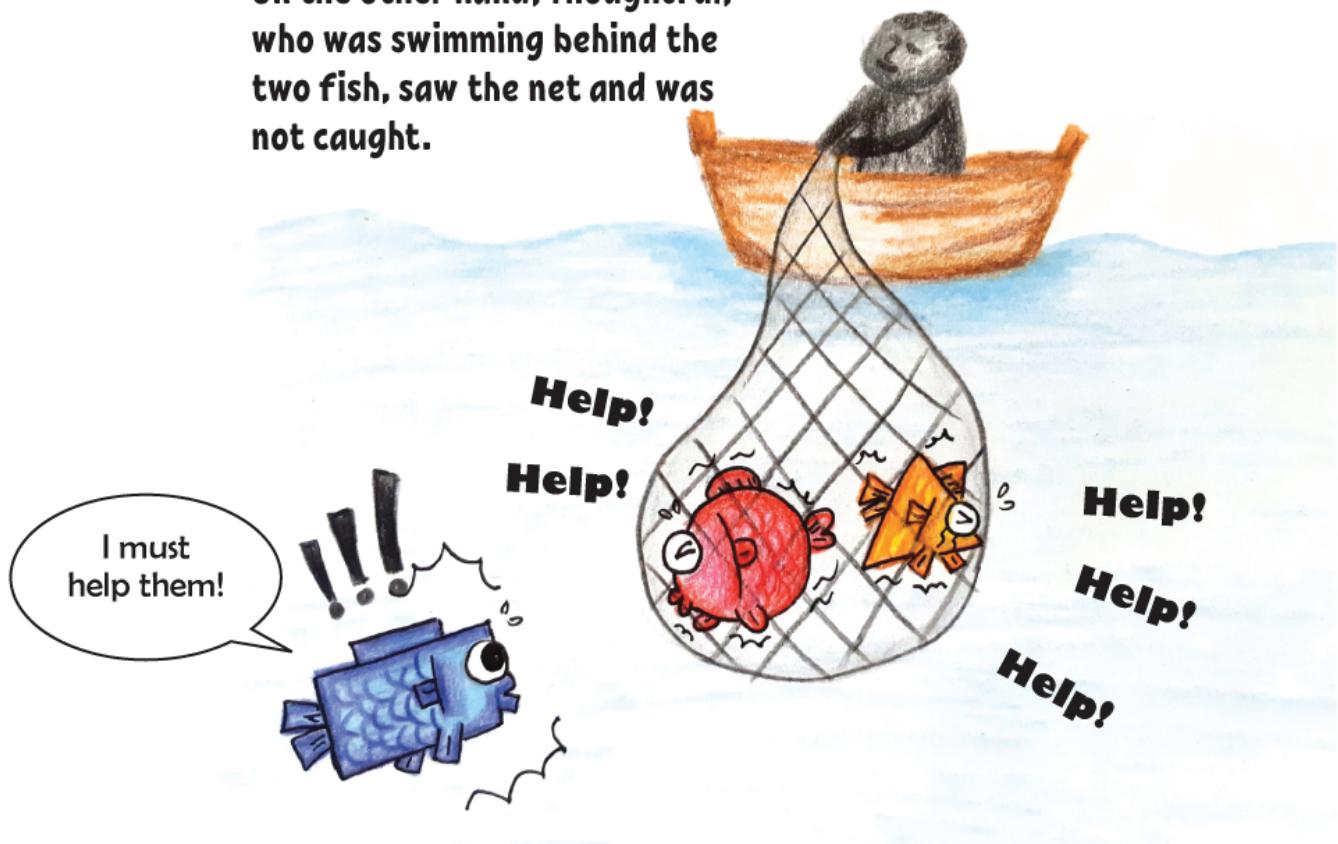
**One day, Over-Thoughtful and Thoughtless  
were looking for food.**

**They did not see the net that the  
fisherman had put into the water.**

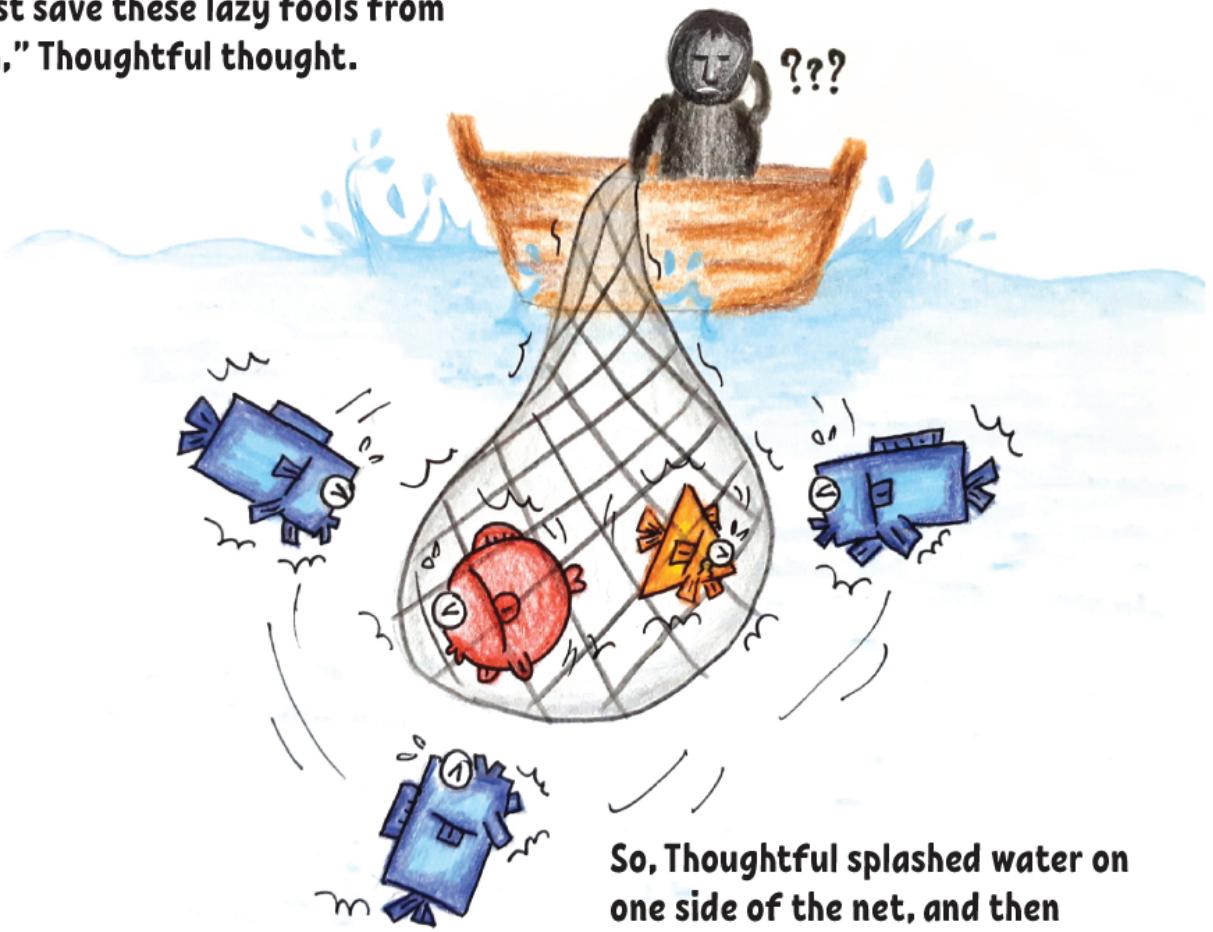


**They swam right into the net and  
were caught!**

**On the other hand, Thoughtful,  
who was swimming behind the  
two fish, saw the net and was  
not caught.**



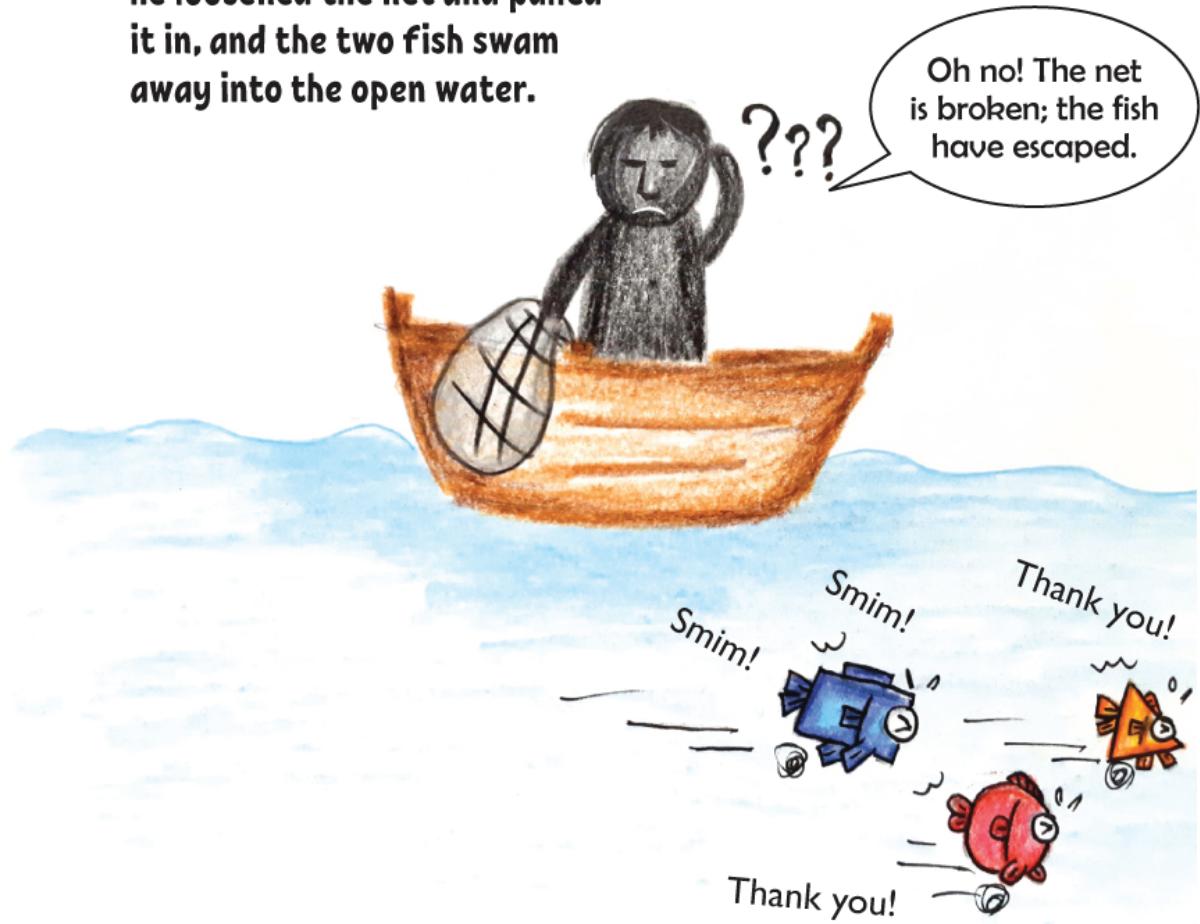
**"I must save these lazy fools from death," Thoughtful thought.**



**So, Thoughtful splashed water on one side of the net, and then swam to the other side and splashed water again.**

**He made it look like the fish had broken through the net and escaped.**

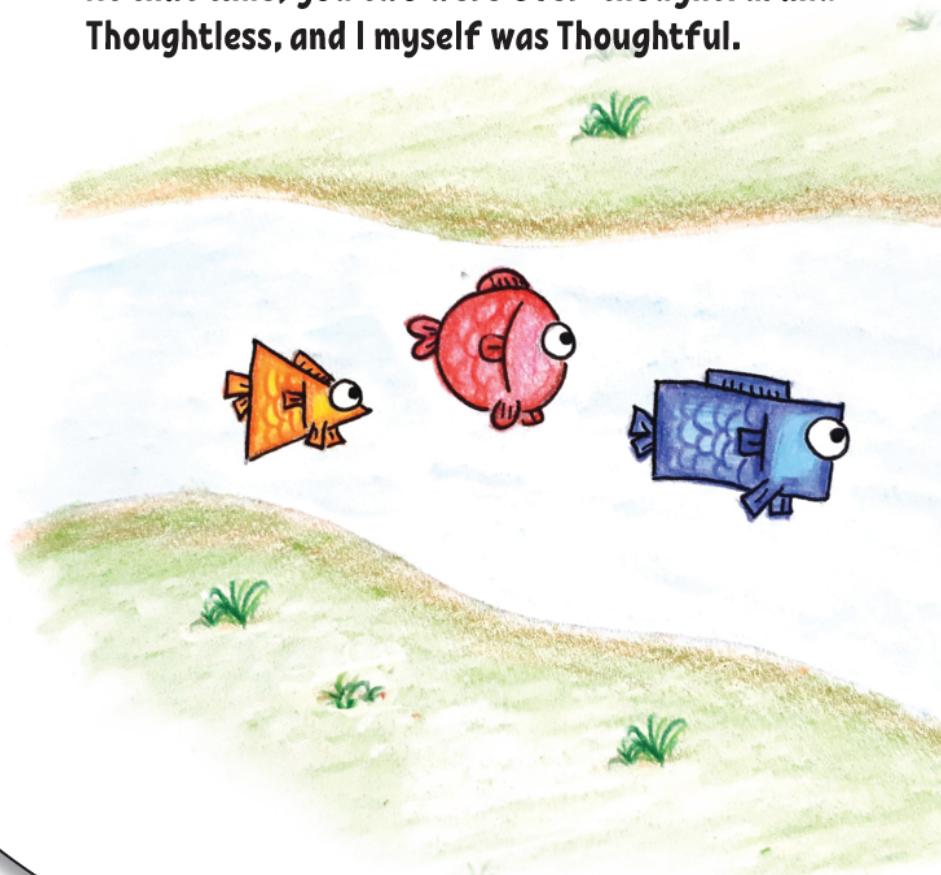
**When the fisherman saw this,  
he loosened the net and pulled  
it in, and the two fish swam  
away into the open water.**

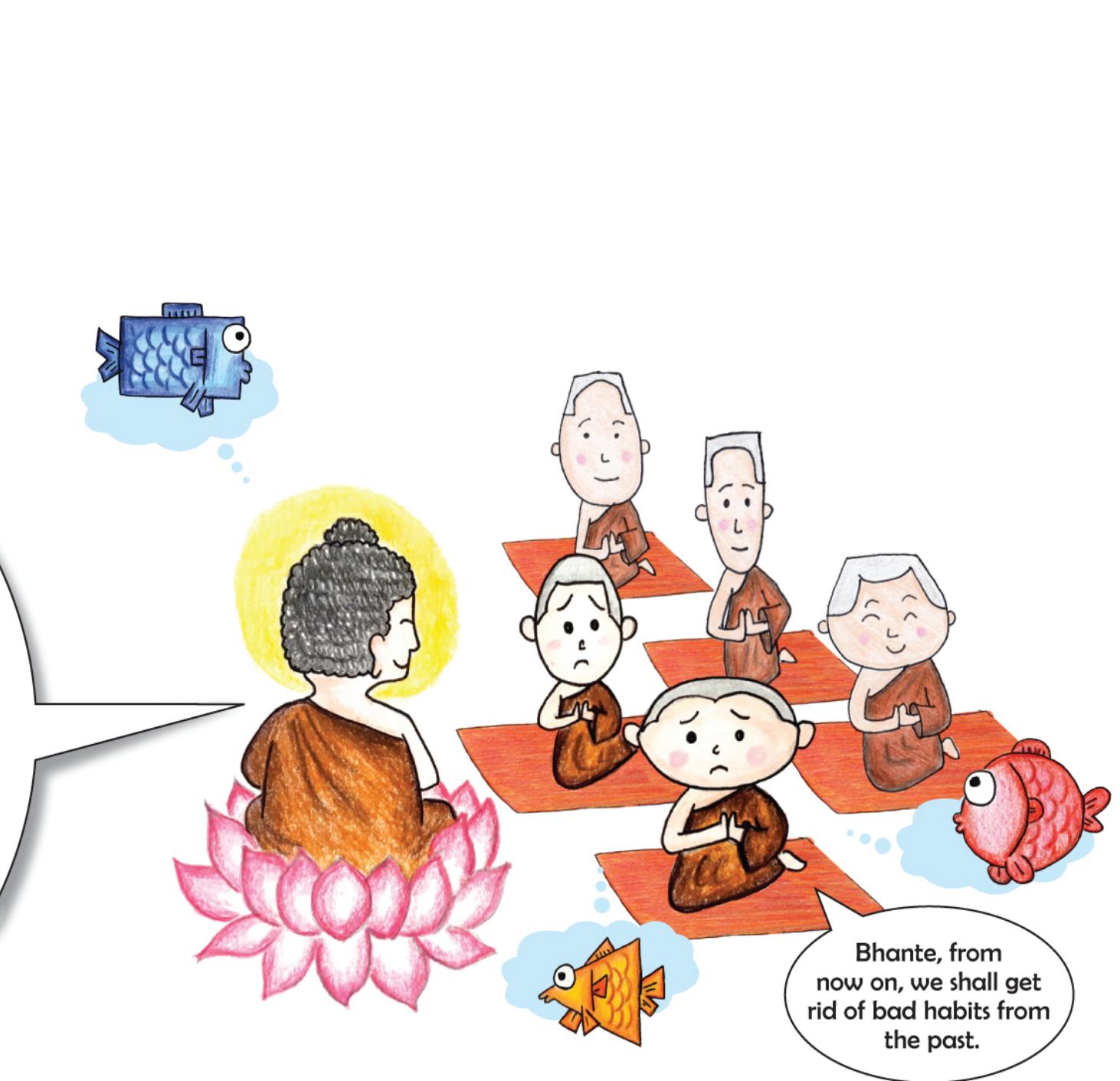


**They had been saved by Thoughtful!**

**The Buddha ended the story and said,**

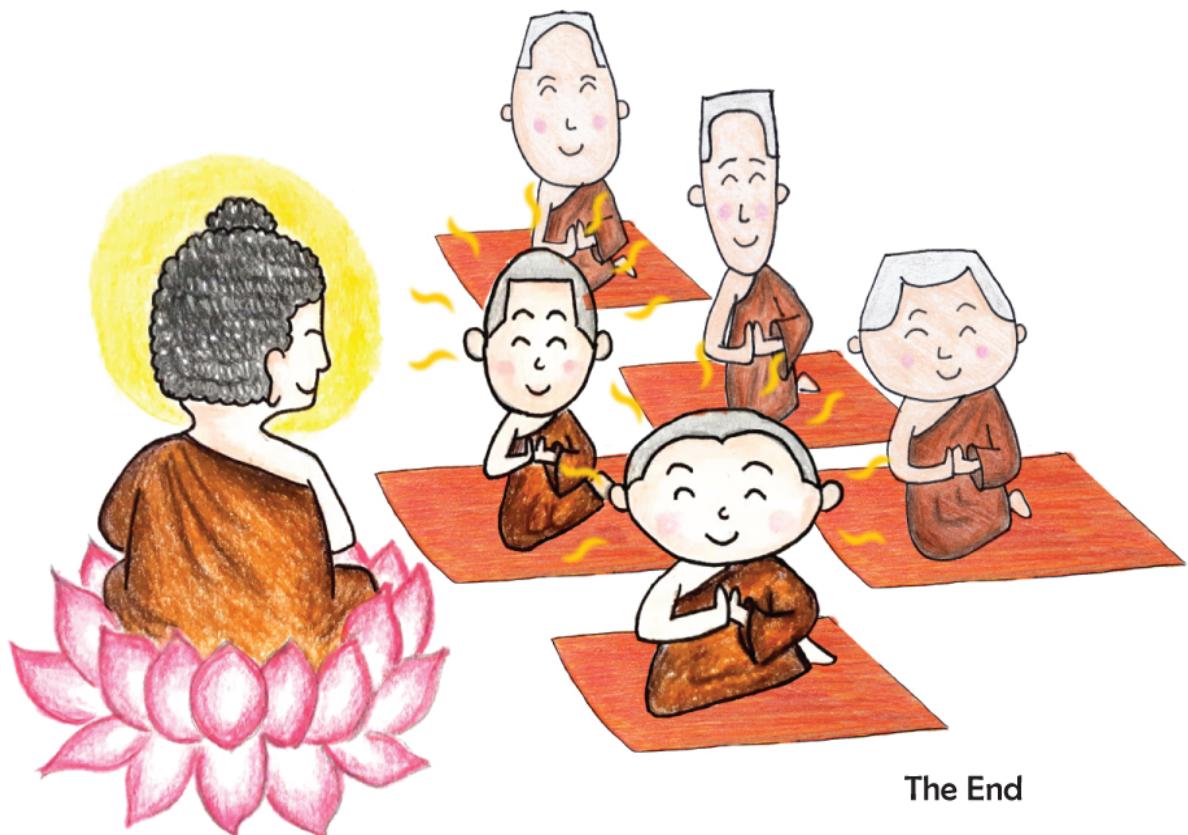
**At that time, you two were Over-thoughtful and  
Thoughtless, and I myself was Thoughtful.**





**The Buddha then explained the Four Noble Truths.**

**Eventually, both elder bhikkhus went on to become stream-enterers (Sotāpanna).**



**The End**

# Glossary

**Bhikkhu:** A Buddhist monk; one who ordains and lives according to Dhamma (Sutta, Abhidhamma) and Vinaya.

**Four Noble Truths:** The Noble Truth of suffering, the Noble Truth of the origin of suffering, the Noble Truth of the cessation of suffering, and the Noble Truth of the way leading to the cessation of suffering.

**Requisites:** The four requisites are robes, alms-food, lodging, and medicine.

**Stream-enterer (Sotāpanna):** The first stage of the 4 stages of the realisation of liberation (Nibbāna). Stream-enterers will no longer be reborn into the woeful realms and instead only into human or higher realms. The four stages of realisation: stream-enterer (Sotāpanna), oncereturner (Sakadāgāmī), non-returner (Anāgāmī) and Arahant.

**Vassa-retreat:** Also known as rains-retreat; vassa-retreat is the three month intensive meditation held during the rainy season each year. The Buddhist monks in retreat live in a monastery or a place without travelling.

# Teacher's Guide

## Some questions to guide students for reflection:

1. Imagine, if it was Over-thoughtful that saw both of his friends in danger, how would he have thought and reacted?
2. Imagine, if it was Thoughtless that saw both of his friends in danger, how would he have thought and reacted?
3. Among the 10 Parami (10 Perfections), which kind of Parami(s) did the Bodhisatta (Thoughtful) cultivate in the story? Please select from below and explain your thinking.

For example, Forbearance. Reason: The Bodhisatta didn't get angry with his friends, even after he had tried multiple times to persuade them to return to their original home. He didn't even get mad when they eventually got themselves into trouble because they didn't return.

### The 10 Perfections are:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> dāna: generosity        | <input type="checkbox"/> khantī: forbearance       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sīla: morality          | <input type="checkbox"/> sacca: truthfulness       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> nekkhamma: renunciation | <input type="checkbox"/> adhiṭṭhāna: determination |
| <input type="checkbox"/> paññā: wisdom           | <input type="checkbox"/> mettā: loving-kindness    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> vīriya: effort          | <input type="checkbox"/> upekkhā: equanimity       |

4. Are there any situations in which you resemble habits of Overthoughtful and Thoughtless? Did you become lazy to move, act, and respond?
  - (a) Please share.
  - (b) How can you overcome this habit?

**Lesson:**

In this story of the three fish, the Buddha explained the dangers of being lazy and not knowing when to leave a dangerous place.

We can see the two unwise fish were named Thoughtless and Over-thoughtful. What is bad about these names? Being thoughtless means that we are careless and don't use our wisdom to evaluate a situation. Being over-thoughtful means, we think too much and will not be able to see important details.

Because these two fish were lazy and did not have wisdom, they could not see the danger they were in. But our Bodhisatta, who had just the right amount of thoughtfulness to see the important signs, could notice the danger and rescue his friends.

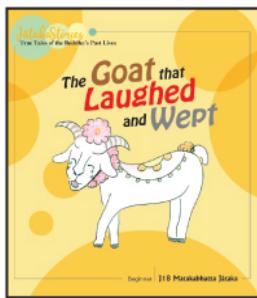
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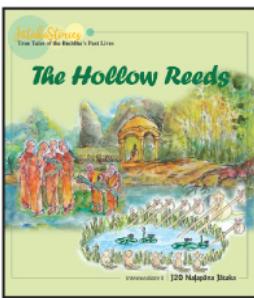
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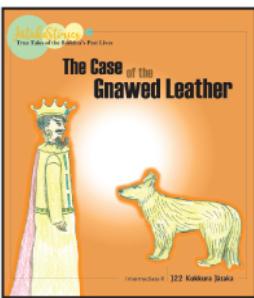
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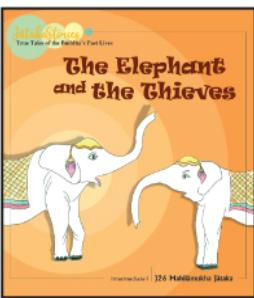
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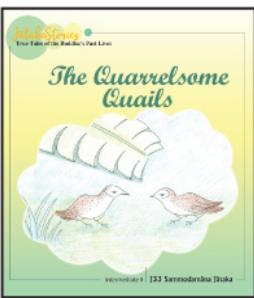
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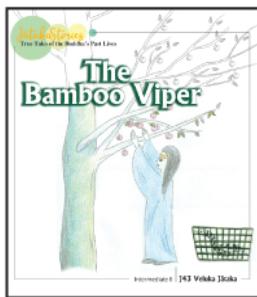
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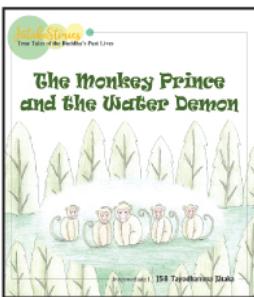
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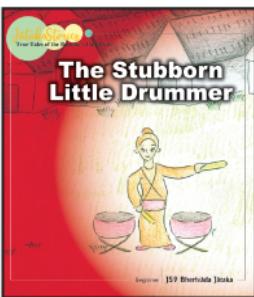
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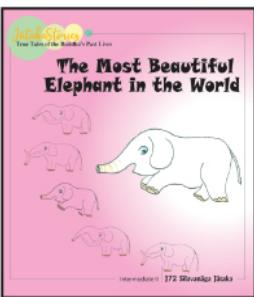
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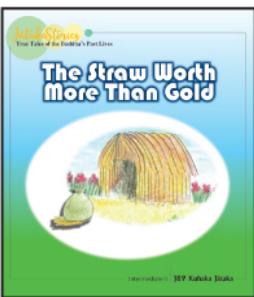
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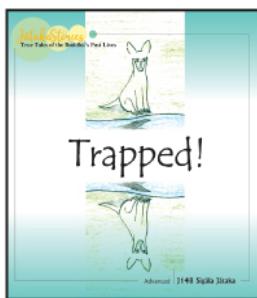
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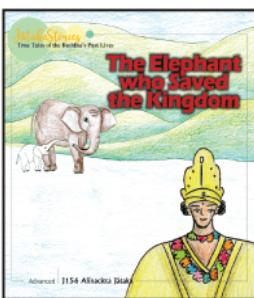
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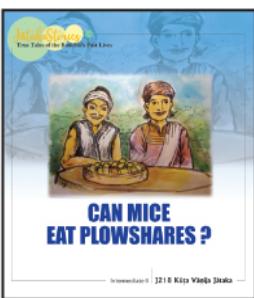
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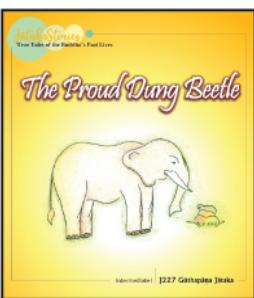
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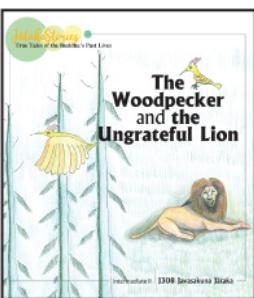
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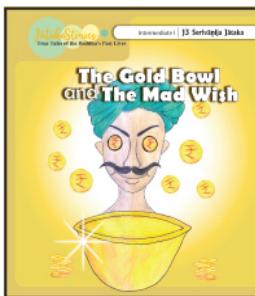


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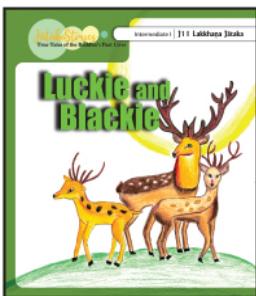
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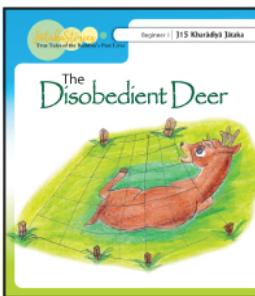
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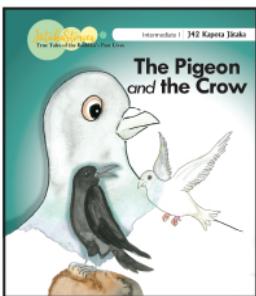
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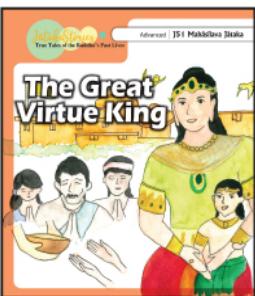
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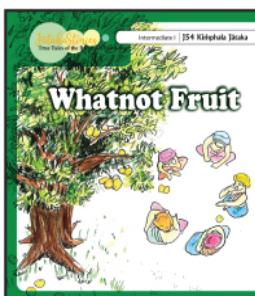
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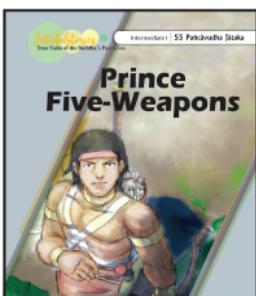
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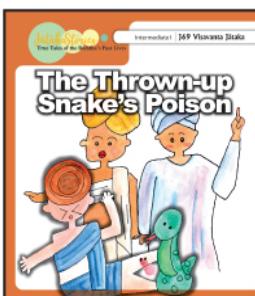
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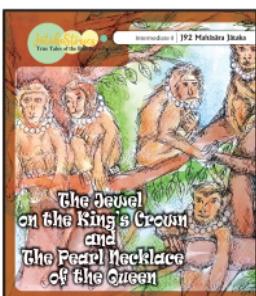
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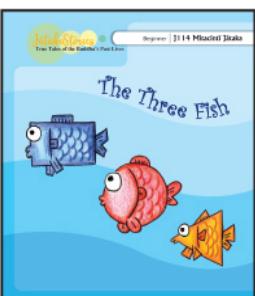
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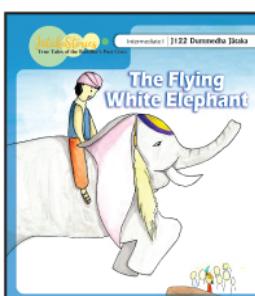
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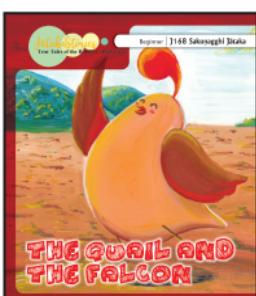
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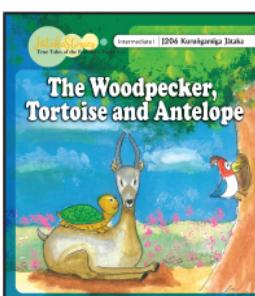
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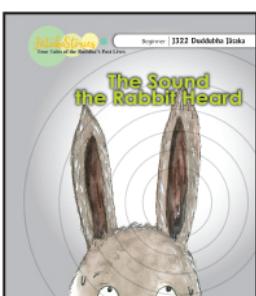
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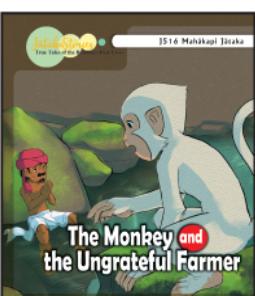
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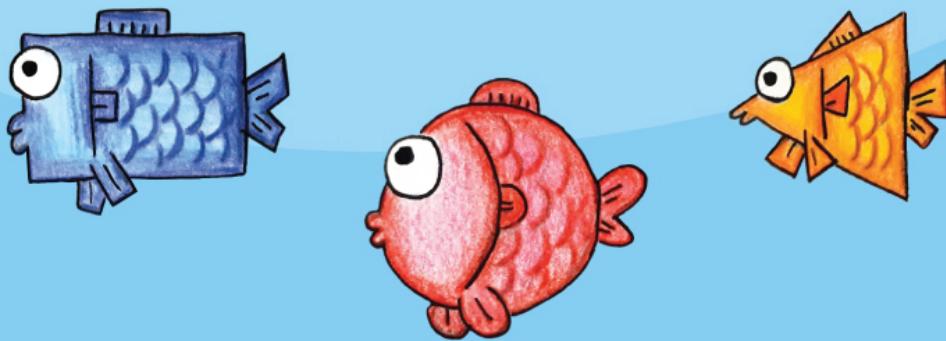
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***Do not put off what you can do today.  
Delaying because of laziness and  
greed lead to disaster.***

---

**A GIFT OF DHAMMA – NOT FOR SALE**

Sabbadānam Dhammadānam Jināti

*The gift of Dhamma excels all gifts*

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